CU Chapter, Lawyer Named In Probe of Pro-Castro Group

Denver Post Special

WASHINGTON, May 17.—An official of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee Tuesday identified Harry Nier, Denver lawyer, as head of the committee's Denver chapter.

The official also identified the University of Colorado as one of 37 colleges and universities throughout the nation which have Fair Play for Cuba student councils on campus.

But the official, Richard Gibson, acting executive secretary, said the organization has no list of the 7,000 members it claims to represent in the United States and Canada. Nier was the only person identified by name as a chapter head.

Gibson also expressed ignorance of the committee's finances although he conceded he is one of two persons authorized to write checks on the group's bank account.

Gibson told the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee he never asked where the group's money came from so he couldn't be forced to tell investigators the names of contributors. Revealing their names, he said, might subject them to harassment and reprisals.

He was the only witness during a more than two-hour meeting of the subcommittee which has been investigating the pro-Castro Cuba organization for over a year.

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Sen. Thomas J. Dodd, (D) of Conn., who presided, said the Fair Play Committee operates on college campuses, its head has a criminal record and its finances are chaotic.

J. G. Sourwine, subcommittee counsel, said investigators think the Fair Play Committee might be supported by the American Communist Party.

In response to questions from Sourwine, Gibson said he did not know that Robert Taber, the committee's executive secretary now in Cuba, was sentenced to up to 30 years in jail in Findlay, Ohio, in 1933 for armed robbery, auto theft and kidnaping. Taber was released from prison on parole in 1942, Sourwine said FBI records showed.

In Denver, Nier said he joined the organization last January shortly after he returned from a trip to Cuba. Upon his return, Nier had high praise for the changes brought about by the Castro government.

The attorney said he joined by "paying $5 to the national." He said he didn't know how many members the Denver chapter has. "I would have to check the records," he said.

Asked if he was associated with the Fair Play for Cuba group at the University of Colorado, Nier said: "Not that I know of."

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